

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 123667 TOSEC 020057

EXDIS

FOL REPEAT OF ADDIS ABABA 6271 TO SECSTATE INFO ASMARA CAIRO
JIDDA KHARTOUM MOGADISCIO MAY 28

QTE:

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 6271

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE REPEAT TOSEC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ET EG US

SUBJECT: ERITREA: EGYPTIAN ATTITUDE

SUMMARY. EGYPTIAN AMB TO ETHIOPIA HAS URGED "ON PERSONAL
BASIS" THAT DURING PRESIDENT'S AND SECRETARY'S MEETING
WITH SADAT IN SALZBURG, USG SHOULD MENTION CONCERN ABOUT
ERITREAN SITUATION AND U.S. HOPE FOR MODERATION IN ARAB
SUPPORT FOR INSURGENTS. END SUMMARY

1. EGYPTIAN AMB SALAH BASSIOUNY ARRIVED IN ETHIOPIA ABOUT TEN DAYS
AGO FROM CAIRO; HOWEVER, HE HAS SPENT SEVERAL YEARS HERE PREVIOUSLY,
AND IS HIGHLY KNOWLEDGEABLE. HE CALLED ON AM HUMMEL TODAY,

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AND OUTLINED HIS GOVT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ERITREAN PROBLEM, AS HE

HAD EXPRESSED IT TO ERITREAN INSURGENT LEADERS IN CAIRO BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT. HE SAID HE TOLD ELF/PLF REPRESENTATIVES THAT EGYPT IN FACT WISHES TO SUPPORT THE TERRITORIAL INTEIGRITY OF ETHIOPIA, AND WOULD NOT RPT NOT SUPPORT THE INSURGENTS. HE HAD TOLD THEM THEY SHOULD BE HAPPY THAT IT IS NOT CONVENIENT AT THIS TIME FOR EGYPT TO MAKE ITS VIEWS KNOWN PUBLICLY, BECAUSE IF EGYPT DID MAKE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT IT WOULD BE TO STRONG DISADVANTAGE OF ELF/PLF AND ALSO WOULD HAVE EFFECT OF REDUCING THE EXISTING SUPPORT THEY RECEIVE FROM SOME ARABS.

2. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH GOE HE HAS STRONGLY URGED FONMIN KIFLE TO UNDERTAKE SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES ON ERITREA BEFORE THE ARAB SUMMIT IN MOGADISCIO JUNE 28 TO HELP FORESTALL ANY EXTREMIST ARAB MOVES, PERHAPS STIMULATED BY SOMALIA. HE URGED KIFLE TO SEND MORE EXPLANATORY MISSIONS TO ARAB STATES, AND ALSO TO MAKE A CLEAR PUBLIC STATEMENT OF DESIRE FOR PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN ERITREA, AND GOE WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS SETTLEMENT WITH ELF/PLF.

3. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND OF EGYPTIAN ATTITUDES, EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD AMB HUMMEL "ON PERSONAL BASIS" HE HOPED THAT U.S. SIDE WOULD HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO PRESIDENT SADAT IN SALZBURG CONCERNING HOPE FOR ARAB MODERATION IN ERITREA. HE BELIEVED THAT SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD ENCOURAGE SADAT TO CONTINUE TO EXERT MODERATING INFLUENCE ON ERITREAN SITUATION DEPSPITE DIFFICULT DIVISIONS WITHIN ARAB LEAGUE.
HUMMEL UNQTE INGERSOLL

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